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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XXX, 1941-42

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(*a*) To form the nucleus of a universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;

(*b*) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and

(*c*) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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A U M

The silver thread that runs through all men's lives is the mysterious power of meditation.
—*Tibetan Verse.*

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XXX November, 1941 No. 1

SIXTY-SIX YEARS

THEOSOPHY, sixty-six years ago this month, was born into a world monstrous with the dogmas of religion; to people, either "blind believers," or avid to exchange for religious creeds the dogmas of science; to some, drunk with the phenomena of spiritualism; and to a very few, willing to "believe" in nothing, because searching for Truth.

Has there been, in the intervening years to now, revolution among these "classes"? No one can deny that "the few" have become the many; the dogmas of religion, no longer believed, are no longer the motivation of men's lives; science has dropped its dogmas, one by one, and draws closer to Secret Doctrine teachings. In spiritualism, the change is less, for it is still tainted with commercialism, even though to conjure up H. P. B. (!) in "the spirit-world" is mark of the "best" medium; even though a "philosophy" of sorts may be paraded in literary form. Science, too, has started to invade the realm of the unseen; has found the astral body; has made "practical" the use of hypnotism; has made profound experiments with the psychic side of nature, as in dreams and other phases of extra-sensory perception.

All this—to what end? of what avail? with what danger?

None, other than H. P. B., foresaw our world of this day, and laid lines of direction to its salvation. She provided, in Karma and Reincarnation, the missing link of evolution, of religion, of science, of philosophy, of ethics—a system of life and thought which alone can make men brothers. Would every exponent of Theosophy be content with the name and honor of being a simple Theosophist, then, disburdened of personal speculations, interpretations and pretense of knowledge, *Masters'* philosophy would yet shine forth to meet the urgent need of the world in its dark hour.

"LET EVERY MAN PROVE HIS OWN WORK"

[H. P. Blavatsky left India in April, 1885, going to the continent of Europe where she spent two years, struggling against poverty, illness and adverse climatic conditions, while writing *The Secret Doctrine*. Her ill-health became so serious in the spring of 1887 that some devoted English theosophists arranged for her to pass the summer in a cottage at Norwood, and in the autumn she took residence at 17 Lansdowne Road, London. Then began the final cycle of her mission, which saw the establishment of *Lucifer,* the formation of the Blavatsky Lodge, and publication of *The Secret Doctrine, The Key to Theosophy, The Voice of the Silence* and *The Theosophical Glossary*. The present article, "Let every Man Prove his Own Work," which appeared in the third number of *Lucifer,* (November 15, 1887), is characteristic of the great editorials she contributed to its pages.—Editors, THEOSOPHY.]

SUCH is the title of a letter received by the Editors of *Lucifer*. It is of so serious a nature that it seems well to make it the subject of this month's editorial. Considering the truths uttered in its few lines, its importance and the bearing it has upon the much obscured subject of Theosophy, and its visible agent or vehicle—the Society of that name—the letter is certainly worthy of the most considerate answer.

"Fiat justitia, ruat coelum!"

Justice will be done to both sides in the dispute; namely, Theosophists and the members of the Theosophical Society[1] on the one hand, and the followers of the *Divine Word* (or Christos), and the so-called Christians, on the other.

We reproduce the letter:

"To the Editors of LUCIFER

"What a grand chance is now open in this country, to the exponents of a noble and advanced religion (if such this Theosophy be[2]) for proving its strength, righteousness and verity to the Western

[1] Not all the members of the Theosophical Society are Theosophists; nor are the members of the so-called Christian Churches all Christians, by any means. True Theosophists, as true Christians, are very, *very* few; and there are practical Theosophists in the fold of Christianity, as there are practical Christians in the Theosophical Society, outside all ritualistic Christianity. "Not every one that saith unto me 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father." (Matthew, vii, 21.) "Believe not in ME, but in the truths I utter." (Buddha's *Aphorisms.*)

[2] "This" Theosophy is not a religion, but rather *the* RELIGION—if one. So far, we prefer to call it a philosophy; one, moreover, which contains every religion, as it is the essence and the foundation of all. Rule III. of the Theos. Body says: "The Society represents no particular religious creed, is entirely *unsectarian,* and includes professors of all faiths."

world, by throwing a penetrating and illuminating ray of its declared light upon the terribly harrowing and perplexing practical problems of our age.

"Surely one of the purest and least self-incrusted duties of man, is to alleviate the sufferings of his fellow man?

"From what I read, and from what I daily come into immediate contact with, I can hardly think it would be possible to over-rate in contemplation, the intense privation and agonizing suffering that is—aye, say it—*at this moment* being endured by a vast proportion of our brothers and sisters, arising in a large measure from their not absolutely having the means for procuring the *bare necessaries of existence.*

"Surely a high and Heaven-born religion—a religion professing to receive its advanced knowledge and Light from 'those more learned in the Science of Life,' should be able to tell us something of how to deal with such life, in its primitive condition of helpless submission to the surrounding circumstances of—civilization!

"If one of our main duties is that of exercising disinterested love towards the Brotherhood, surely 'those more learned' ones, whether in the flesh, or out of it, can and will, if appealed to by the votaries, aid them in discovering ways and means for such an end, and in organising some great fraternal scheme for dealing *rightly* with questions which are so appalling in their complexity, and which must and do press with such irresistible force upon all those who are earnest in their endeavours to carry out the will of Christ in a Christian Land? "L. F. Ff.

"October 25, 1887."

This honest-spoken and sincere letter contains two statements; an implied accusation against "Theosophy" (*i.e.*, the Society of that name), and a virtual admission that Christianity—or, again, rather its ritualistic and dogmatic religions—deserve the same and even a sterner rebuke. For if "Theosophy," represented by its professors, merits on external appearance the reproach that so far it has failed to transfer divine wisdom from the region of the metaphysical into that of practical work, "Christianity," that is, merely professing Christians, churchmen and laymen lie under a like accusation, evidently. "Theosophy" has, certainly, failed to discover *infallible* ways and means of bringing all its votaries to exercise "disinterested love" in their Brotherhood; it has not yet been able to relieve suffering in mankind at large; but neither has Christianity. And not even the writer of the above letter, nor any one else, can show sufficient excuse for the Christians in this respect. Thus the admission that "those who are earnest in their endeavour to carry out the will of Christ in a Christian land" *need the help of* " 'those more learned,' whether

(pagan adepts) in flesh, or (spirits?) out of it" is very suggestive, for it contains the defence and the *raison d'être* of the Theosophical Society. Tacit though it is, once that it comes from the pen of a sincere Christian, one who longs to learn some practical means to relieve the sufferings of the starving multitudes—this admission becomes the greatest and most complete justification for the existence of the Theosophical Brotherhood; a full confession of the absolute necessity for such a body independent of, and untrammelled by, any enchaining dogmas, and it points out at the same time the signal failure of Christianity to accomplish the desired results.

Truly said Coleridge that "good works may exist *without* saving (?) principles, therefore cannot contain in themselves the principles of salvation; but saving principles never did, never can exist without good works." Theosophists admit the definition, and disagree with the Christians only as to the nature of these "saving principles." The Church (or churches) maintain that the only saving principle is belief in Jesus, or the carnalized Christ of the soul-killing dogma; theosophy, undogmatic and unsectarian, answers, it is not so. The only *saving* principle dwells in man himself, and has never dwelt outside of his immortal divine self, *i.e.*, it is the true Christos, as it is the true Buddha, the divine inward light which proceeds from the eternal unmanifesting unknown ALL. And this light *can only be made known by its works—faith* in it having to remain ever blind in all, save in the man himself who feels that light within his soul.

Therefore, the tacit admission of the author of the above letter covers another point of great importance. The writer seems to have felt that which many, among those who strive to help the suffering, have felt and expressed. The creeds of the churches fail to supply the *intellectual* light, and the true wisdom which are needed to make the practical philanthropy carried out, by the true and earnest followers of Christ, a *reality*. The "practical" people either go on "doing good" unintelligently, and thus often do harm instead; or, appalled by the awful problem before them, and failing to find in their "churches" any clue, or a hope of solution, they retire from the battlefield and let themselves be drifted blindly by the current in which they happen to be born.

Of late it has become the fashion for friends, as well as for foes, to reproach the Theosophical Society with doing no practical work, but losing itself in the clouds of metaphysics. Metaphysicians, we are told, by those who like to repeat stale arguments, have been learning their lesson for the last few thousand years; and it is now high time that they should begin to do some practical work. Agreed; but con-

sidering that the Christian churches count nearly nineteen centuries of existence, and that the Theosophical Society and Brotherhood is a body hardly twelve years old; considering again that the Christian churches roll in fabulous wealth, and number their adherents by hundreds of millions, whereas the Theosophical Brotherhood is but a few thousand strong, and that it has no fund, or funds, at its disposal, but that 98 per cent. of its members are as poor and as uninfluential as the aristocracy of the Christian church is rich and powerful; taking all this into consideration, there would be much to say if the theosophists would only choose to press the matter upon the public notice. Meanwhile, as the bitterest critics of the "leaders" of the Theosophical Society are by no means only outsiders, but as there are members of that society who always find a pretext to be dissatisfied, we ask: Can works of charity that will be known among men be accomplished without money? Certainly not. And yet, notwithstanding all this, none of its (European) members, except a few devoted officers in charge of societies, will do *practical* work; but some of them, those especially who have never lifted a finger to relieve suffering, and help their outside, poorer brothers, are those who talk the most loudly, and are the bitterest in their denunciations of the *unspirituality* and the unfitness of the "leaders of theosophy." By this they remove themselves into the outer ring of critics, like those spectators at the play who laugh at an actor passably representing Hamlet, while they themselves could not walk on the stage with a letter on a salver. While in India, comparatively poor theosophists have opened gratuitous dispensaries for the sick, hospitals, schools, and everything they could think of, asking no returns from the poor, as the missionaries do, no abandonment of one's forefathers' religion, as a heavy price for favours received, have the English theosophists, as a rule, done a single thing for those suffering multitudes, whose pitiful cry rings throughout the whole Heavens as a protest against the actual state of things in Christendom?

We take this opportunity of saying, in reply to others as much as to our correspondent, that, up till now, the energies of the Society have been chiefly occupied in organising, extending, and solidifying the Society itself, which work has taxed its time, energies and resources to such an extent as to leave it far less powerful for practical charity than we would have wished. But, even so, compared with the influence and the funds at the disposal of the Society, its work in practical charity, if less widely known, will certainly bear favourable comparison with that of professing Christians, with their enormous resources in money, workers, and opportunities of all kinds. It must

not be forgotten that practical charity is not one of the *declared* objects of the Society. It goes without saying, and needs no "declaration," that every member of the Society must be practically philanthropic if he be a theosophist at all; and our declared work is, in reality, more important and more efficacious than work in the everyday plane which bears more evident and immediate fruit, for the direct effect of an appreciation of theosophy is to make those charitable who were not so before. Theosophy creates the charity which afterwards, and of its own accord, makes itself manifest in works.

Theosophy is correctly—though in this particular case, it is rather ironically—termed "a High, Heaven-born Religion." It is argued that since it professes to receive its advanced knowledge and light from "those more learned in the Science of Life," the latter ought and *must,* if appealed to by their votaries (the theosophists), aid them in discovering ways and means, in organising some great fraternal scheme, etc.

The scheme was planned, and the rules and laws to guide such a practical brotherhood, have been given by those "more learned in the Science of (practical, daily, *altruistic*) life"; aye, verily "more learned" in it than any other men since the days of Gautama Buddha and the Gnostic Essenes. The "scheme" dates back to the year when the Theosophical Society was founded. Let anyone read its wise and noble laws embodied to this day in the Statutes of the Fraternity, and judge for himself whether, if carried out rigorously and applied to practical life, the "scheme" would not have proved the most beneficent to mankind in general, and especially to our poorer brethren of "the starving multitudes." Theosophy teaches the spirit of "non-separateness," the evanescence and illusion of human creeds and dogma, hence, inculcates *universal love and charity for all mankind "without distinction of race, colour, caste or creed"*; is it not therefore the fittest to alleviate the sufferings of mankind? No true theosophist would refuse admission into a hospital, or any charitable establishment, to any man, woman or child, under the pretext that he is *not* a theosophist, as a Roman Catholic would when dealing with a Protestant, and *vice versa.* No true theosophist of the original rules would fail to put into practice the parable of the "Good Samaritan," or proffer help only to entice the unwary who, he hopes, will become a pervert from his god and the gods of his forefathers. None would slander his brother, none let a needy man go unhelped, none offer fine talk instead of practical love and charity.

Is it then the fault of Theosophy, any more than it is the fault of the Christ-teachings, if the majority of the members of the Theo-

sophical Society, often changing their philosophical and religious views upon entering our Body, have yet remained practically the same as they were when professing *lip* Christianity? Our laws and rules are the same as given to us from the beginning; it is the general members of the Society who have allowed them to become virtually *obsolete*. Those few who are ever ready to sacrifice their time and labour to work for the poor, and who do, unrecognised and unthanked for it, good work wherever they can, are often too poor themselves to put their larger schemes of charity into objective practical form, however willing they may be.

"The fault I find with the Theosophical Society," said one of the most eminent surgeons in London to one of the editors, quite recently, "is that I cannot discover that any of its members really lead the Christ-life." This seemed a very serious accusation from a man who is not only in the front rank of his profession, and valued for his kindly nature, by his patients, and by society, and well-known as a quiet doer of many good deeds. The only possible answer to be made was that the Christ-life is undeniably the ideal of every one worthy in any sense of the name of a Theosophist, and that if it is not lived it is because there are none strong enough to carry it out. Only a few days later the same complaint was put in a more graphic form by a celebrated lady-artist.

"You Theosophists don't do enough good for me," she said pithily. And in her case also there is the right to speak, given by the fact that she leads two lives—one, a butterfly existence in society, and the other a serious one, which makes little noise, but has much purpose. Those who regard life as a great vocation, like the two critics of the Theosophical movement whom we have just quoted, have a right to demand of such a movement more than mere words. They themselves endeavour very quietly to lead the "Christ-life," and they cannot understand a number of people uniting in the effort towards this life without practical results being apparent. Another critic of the same character who has the best possible right to criticise, being a thoroughly practical philanthropist and charitable to the last degree, has said of the Theosophists that their much talking and writing seems to resolve itself into mere intellectual luxury, productive of no direct good to the world.

The point of difference between the Theosophists (when we use this term we mean, not members of the Society, but people who are really using the organization as a method of learning more of the true wisdom-religion which exists as a vital and eternal fact behind all such efforts) and the practical philanthropists, religious or secu-

lar, is a very serious one, and the answer, that probably none of them are strong enough yet to lead the "Christ-life," is only a portion of the truth. The situation can be put very plainly, in so many words. The religious philanthropist holds a position of his own, which cannot in any way concern or affect the Theosophist. He does not do good merely for the sake of doing good, but also as a means towards his own salvation. This is the outcome of the selfish and personal side of man's nature, which has so coloured and affected a grand religion that its devotees are little better than the idol-worshippers who ask their deity of clay to bring them luck in business, and the payment of debts. The religious philanthropist who hopes to gain salvation by good works has simply, to quote a well-worn yet ever fresh witticism, exchanged worldliness for other-worldliness.

The secular philanthropist is really at heart a socialist, and nothing else; he hopes to make men happy and good by bettering their physical position. No serious student of human nature can believe in this theory for a moment. There is no doubt that it is a very agreeable one, because if it is accepted there is immediate, straightforward work to undertake. "The poor ye have always with you." The causation which produced human nature itself produced poverty, misery, pain, degradation, at the same time that it produced wealth, and comfort, and joy and glory. Lifelong philanthropists, who have started on their work with a joyous youthful conviction that it is possible to "do good," have, though never relaxing the habit of charity, confessed to the present writer that, as a matter of fact, misery cannot be relieved. It is a vital element in human nature, and is as necessary to some lives as pleasure is to others.

It is a strange thing to observe how practical philanthropists will eventually, after long and bitter experience, arrive at a conclusion which, to an occultist, is from the first a working hypothesis. This is, that misery is not only endurable, but agreeable to many who endure it. A noble woman, whose life has been given to the rescue of the lowest class of wretched girls, those who seem to be driven to vice by want, said, only a few days since, that with many of these outcasts it is not possible to raise them to any apparently happier lot. And this she distinctly stated (and she can speak with authority, having spent her life literally among them, and studied them thoroughly), is not so much from any love of vice, but from love of that very state which the wealthy classes call misery. They prefer the savage life of a bare-foot, half-clad creature, with no roof at night and no food by day, to any comforts which can be offered them. By comforts, we do not mean the workhouse or the reformatory, but the comforts of a

quiet home; and we can give chapter and verse, so to speak, to show that this is the case, not merely with the children of outcasts, who might be supposed to have a savage heredity, but with the children of gentle, cultivated, and Christian people.

Our great towns hide in their slums thousands of beings whose history would form an inexplicable enigma, a perfectly baffling moral picture, could they be written out clearly, so as to be intelligible. But they are only known to the devoted workers among the outcast classes, to whom they become a sad and terrible puzzle, not to be solved, and therefore, better not discussed. Those who have no clue to the science of life are compelled to dismiss such difficulties in this manner, otherwise they would fall, crushed beneath the thought of them. The social question as it is called, the great deep waters of misery, the deadly apathy of those who have power and possessions—these things are hardly to be faced by a generous soul who has not reached to the great idea of evolution, and who has not guessed at the marvelous mystery of human development.

The Theosophist is placed in a different position from any of these persons, because he has heard of the vast scope of life with which all mystic and occult writers and teachers deal, and he has been brought very near to the great mystery. Indeed, none, though they may have enrolled themselves as Fellows of the Society, can be called in any serious sense Theosophists, until they have begun to consciously taste in their own persons, this same mystery; which is, indeed, a law inexorable, by which man lifts himself by degrees from the state of a beast to the glory of a God. The rapidity with which this is done is different with every living soul; and the wretches who hug the primitive taskmaster, *misery,* choose to go slowly through a tread-mill course which may give them innumerable lives of physical sensation—whether pleasant or painful, well-beloved because tangible to the very lowest senses. The Theosophist who desires to enter upon occultism takes some of Nature's privileges into his own hands by that very wish, and soon discovers that experiences come to him with double-quick rapidity. His business is then to recognise that he is under a—to him—new and swifter law of development, and to snatch at the lessons that come to him.

But, in recognising this, he also makes another discovery. He sees that it takes a very wise man to do good works without danger of doing incalculable harm. A highly developed adept in life may grasp the nettle, and by his great intuitive powers, know whom to relieve from pain and whom to leave in the mire that is their best teacher. The poor and wretched themselves will tell anyone who is able to

win their confidence what disastrous mistakes are made by those who come from a different class and endeavour to help them. Kindness and gentle treatment will sometimes bring out the worst qualities of a man or woman who has led a fairly presentable life when kept down by pain and despair. May the Master of Mercy forgive us for saying such words of any human creatures, all of whom are a part of ourselves, according to the law of human brotherhood which no disowning of it can destroy. But the words are true. None of us know the darkness which lurks in the depths of our own natures until some strange and unfamiliar experience rouses the whole being into action. So with these others who seem more miserable than ourselves.

As soon as he begins to understand what a friend and teacher pain can be, the Theosophist stands appalled before the mysterious problem of human life, and though he may long to do good works, equally dreads to do them wrongly until he has himself acquired greater power and knowledge. The ignorant doing of good works may be vitally injurious, as all but those who are blind in their love of benevolence are compelled to acknowledge. In this sense the answer made as to lack of Christ-like lives among Theosophists, that there are probably none strong enough to live such, is perfectly correct and covers the whole question. For it is not the spirit of self-sacrifice, or of devotion, or of desire to help that is lacking, but the strength to acquire knowledge and power and intuition, so that the deeds done shall really be worthy of the "Buddha-Christ" spirit. Therefore it is that Theosophists cannot pose as a body of philanthropists, though secretly they may adventure on the path of good works. They profess to be a body of learners merely, pledged to help each other and all the rest of humanity, so far as in them lies, to a better understanding of the mystery of life, and to a better knowledge of the peace which lies beyond it.

But as it is an inexorable law, that the ground must be tilled if the harvest is to be reaped, so Theosophists are obliged to work in the world unceasingly, and very often in doing this to make serious mistakes, as do all workers who are not embodied Redeemers. Their efforts may not come under the title of good works, and they may be condemned as a school of idle talkers, yet they are an outcome and fruition of this particular moment of time, when the ideas which they hold are greeted by the crowd with interest; and therefore their work is good, as the lotus-flower is good when it opens in the mid-day sun.

None know more keenly and definitely than they that good works are necessary; only these cannot be rightly accomplished without knowledge. Schemes for Universal Brotherhood, and the redemp-

tion of mankind, might be given out plentifully by the great adepts of life, and would be mere dead-letter utterances while individuals remain ignorant, and unable to grasp the great meaning of their teachers. To Theosophists we say, let us carry out the rules given us for our society before we ask for any further schemes or laws. To the public and our critics we say, try to understand the value of good works before you demand them of others, or enter upon them rashly yourselves. Yet it is an absolute fact that without good works the spirit of brotherhood would die in the world; and this can never be. Therefore is the double activity of learning and doing most necessary; we have to do good, and we have to do it *rightly,* with knowledge.

* * * * *

It is well known that the first rule of the society is to carry out the object of forming the nucleus of a universal brotherhood. The practical working of this rule was explained by those who laid it down, to the following effect:—

"HE WHO DOES NOT PRACTISE ALTRUISM; HE WHO IS NOT PREPARED TO SHARE HIS LAST MORSEL WITH A WEAKER OR POORER THAN HIMSELF; HE WHO NEGLECTS TO HELP HIS BROTHER MAN, OF WHATEVER RACE, NATION, OR CREED, WHENEVER AND WHEREVER HE MEETS SUFFERING, AND WHO TURNS A DEAF EAR TO THE CRY OF HUMAN MISERY; HE WHO HEARS AN INNOCENT PERSON SLANDERED, WHETHER A BROTHER THEOSOPHIST OR NOT, AND DOES NOT UNDERTAKE HIS DEFENCE AS HE WOULD UNDERTAKE HIS OWN —IS NO THEOSOPHIST."

THE SECRET PATH

There are many eyes that can detect and honour the prudent and household virtues; there are many that can discern Genius on his starry track, though the mob is incapable; but when that love which is all-suffering, all-abstaining, all-aspiring, which has vowed to itself that it will be a wretch and also a fool in this world, sooner than soil its white hands by any compliances, comes into our streets and houses —only the pure and aspiring can know its face, and the only compliment they can pay it, is to own it. —RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

FREEDOM IS KNOWLEDGE

ALL ethics, all moral philosophy, depends upon the basic conception that man is free to choose between good and evil actions, that he is in truth the "master of his destiny." The simple affirmation of moral freedom, however, and the pointing to an inward sense of choice felt by every man, are not sufficient to establish the fact of freedom on a rational basis. The real question to be answered is, When can man be said to be truly free, and why the self-deception which blinds him to the subtle influence of suggestion?

The law involved in the answer to this question is stated by H. P. Blavatsky. The "Mind," she says, "is *manas,* or rather its lower reflection, which whenever it disconnects itself, for the time being, with *kama,* becomes the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of the free-will in physical man." Here is the basis in occult psychology for every ascetic practice, every form of "yoga," eastern and western, every purificatory rite in religious history. However much their doctrines were subsequently distorted and misunderstood, the Great Teachers all advocated the adoption of a virtuous and disciplined life in order that men might become really *free*—free to choose for themselves, as spiritual beings—for without freedom there can be no morality, no brotherhood, no spiritual evolution.

In the present cycle, Desire, or *kama,* is the preponderating principle, and the Lower Manas of the ordinary man is bound by its influence. Insofar, then, as the individual man allows himself to be affected by the general tendencies of the Race Mind, he can not regard himself as "free," for his decisions are but an off-print of the common standards of the society in which he lives. It is this great mass of men that *The Voice of the Silence* refers to as "the living Dead,"—"the men of Karmic sorrow." In the first of his series of articles, "Conversations on Occultism," W. Q. Judge devotes an answer of the "Sage" to the powerful influence of the age upon even the aspirant to occult knowledge:

> It has effect on everyone, but the student after passing along in his development feels the effect more than the ordinary man. Were it otherwise, the sincere and aspiring students all over the world would advance at once to those heights towards which they strive. It takes a very strong soul to hold back the age's heavy hand, and it is all the more difficult because that influence, being a part of the student's larger life, is not so well understood by him. It operates in the same

way as a structural defect in a vessel. All the inner as well as the outer fibre of the man is the result of long centuries of earthly lives lived here by his ancestors. These sow seeds of thoughts and physical tendencies in a way that you cannot comprehend. All those tendencies affect him. Many powers once possessed are hidden so deep as to be unseen, and he struggles against obstacles constructed ages ago. Further yet are the peculiar alternations brought about in the astral world. It, being at once a photographic plate, so to say, and also a reflector, has become the keeper of mistakes of ages past which it continually reflects upon us from a plane to which most of us are strangers. In that sense therefore, free as we suppose ourselves, we are walking about completely hypnotized by the past, acting blindly under the suggestions thus cast upon us. (THEOSOPHY I, 375-6.)

Freedom requires self-control, and involves a thorough knowledge of that which is to be controlled. Unless a man knows something of the nature of the true Self, he cannot take the position of the Perceiver, and so is prevented from realizing the difference between the psychic and the noëtic impulsions in his own nature. Of what value to mankind is the outward purity of the Christian mystic, so long as his dream of a personal God is taken for reality? He is still a worshipper of images. Carried away by the vividness of his psychic vision, he loses his freedom to a delusion that will constantly warp his judgment until it is overcome. How can a man ignorant of the doctrine of the "lifetime meditation" ever be free of this most subtle determinant of action? It is practiced "every hour by philosopher, mystic, saint, criminal, artist, artisan, merchant." Unless a man takes refuge in the true Self, never can he break the spell of fascination thrown over his mental processes by this continuous current of thought. The ideal of Self-knowledge is indeed the most esoteric of all the teachings of Theosophy, for without it there is only relative truth. Outside such initiation "for every thinker there will be a 'Thus far shalt thou go and no farther,' mapped out by his intellectual capacity, as clearly and unmistakably as there is for the progress of any nation or race in its cycle by the law of Karma."

The freedom men long for is locked in their own hearts; they are bound fast by their attachments to objects which are less than the One Self, whether of body, feelings or mind. "The key to all our successes," wrote H. P. B., in describing the achievements of the Theosophical Society, "is in our recognition of the fact of the Higher Self—colourless, cosmopolitan, unsectarian, sexless, unworldly, altruistic—and the doing of our work on that basis." There is no greater occult truth than this.

FIGURES OF THE TRANSITION AGE

Materialists . . . will be driven out of their position not by spiritual, theosophical, or any other physical or even mental phenomena, but simply by the enormous *gaps* and *chasms* that open daily and will still be opening before them, as one discovery follows another, until they are finally knocked off their feet by the ninth wave of simple common sense. —H. P. BLAVATSKY, *The Secret Doctrine,* 1888.

At the present, we are quite without any deterministic theory describing the events themselves and in consonance with the facts. For the time being, we have to admit that we do not possess any general theoretical basis for physics, which can be regarded as a logical foundation. —ALBERT EINSTEIN, *Science,* May 24, 1940.

[Biologists] are not yet agreed upon the question of how a new species originates. In fact, there is some difference of opinion as to just what constitutes a species, as contrasted with a race, a variety or even a genus. —ELIOT BLACKWELDER, *Science,* April 18, 1941.

Living things are well termed *organisms.* The activities of their manifold structures are so integrated and coordinated that a successfully functioning whole individual develops. As to how this is accomplished very little is known.
—EDMUND W. SINNOTT, *Science,* Jan. 15, 1937.

THE real explanation of the general frustration and bewilderment implicit in these passages from contemporary scientists lies in the basic assumption of scientific method that matter is something unintelligent and inert—"dead." For three hundred years western scientists have been attempting to reconcile facts and processes, revealed to them by Nature herself, with a belief inherited from Mediaeval theology. Today they are on the verge of relinquishing this hopeless objective, and are almost ready to adopt the "Hylozoistic" view of the ancient Greek philosophers. The opposition between "living" and "dead" is now only a "habit" of thought, discoveries on the frontier of biochemical research having rendered the concept meaningless for the laboratory technician. Remains for it to be overcome as a prejudice which stands in the way of further progress in all the sciences.

A recent writer on science has called attention to the fact that the notion of "dead" matter, "which to the modern mind seems almost self-evident," was unknown in Greek philosophy. With Thales, the early cosmologists believed that "All things are full of Gods," and it never occurred to them to doubt that the Universe is alive, both

in its totality and in the myriads of intelligences which form collectively the world of objective Nature. "The magnet," Thales had pointed out, "is alive; for it has the power of moving iron."

The idea of "dead matter" is commonly attributed to Descartes, who, "in his desire to deprive matter of every trace of activity or life, constructed a mechanistic cosmology in which even the gravitational property of matter is impressed on it from without."[1] But this conception has a history that reaches deep into Christian dogma, as elaborated by the scholastics of the Middle Ages, from whom Descartes borrowed many of his principal ideas. The primitive Pantheism of the ancients was doomed by the extra-cosmic deity of Christian theology, and as the powers of creative activity were more and more attributed to an *outside* agency, matter increasingly took on a lifeless character, until finally there was left only its inertness and passive malleability to the designing hand of Jehovah. Here, "made to order," was the concept of matter which became the keystone of scientific materialism—it fitted perfectly into the arch of mechanical forces that Galileo and Newton spent their lives to erect. Descartes did not "invent" it, but merely raised into view an idea that was clearly implied by scholastic theology, popularizing it through association with the new knowledge of mathematics. The famous French thinker was not the creator of modern materialism, but rather the architect who devised its pattern. His own piety, genuine or assumed, acted only as a temporary restraint. God, and even the soul, were soon forgotten, for on these subjects Descartes said nothing new. His "proofs" of God were but adaptations of the ontological arguments of Anselm, and, as Ellis says, "torn from their scholastic setting and transplanted into his non-scholastic philosophy, carry no conviction."

So firmly embedded in modern thought became the idea of dead matter, that 150 years after Descartes published his *Principles of Philosophy,* the great Immanuel Kant wrote: "The possibility of living matter cannot even be thought; its conception involves a contradiction because lifelessness, *inertia,* constitutes the essential character of matter." (*Critique of Judgment,* 1793.) This theory of western science H. P. Blavatsky called a common error "than which there can be no greater error in the views of an occultist." (*Transactions,* p. 123.) And in *The Secret Doctrine,* she said:

> Where have the many attempts made by Science to bind, to connect, and define all the phenomena of organic life by mere physical

[1] William Ellis, *The Idea of the Soul in Western Philosophy and Science* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1940), p. 150.

> and chemical manifestations, brought it to? To speculation generally —mere soap-bubbles, that burst one after the other before men of Science were permitted to discover the real facts. All this would have been avoided, and the progress of knowledge would have proceeded with gigantic strides, had only Science and its philosophy abstained from accepting hypotheses on the mere one-sided Knowledge of *their* Matter (I, 149).

Kant formulated this "one-sided" view of matter in the last decade of the eighteenth century, and it became the point of departure for most of the scientific investigations which originated in the nineteenth century. This is illustrated by a statement from Berthelot, a French chemist who had great influence on the development of theory in organic chemistry and held important posts in scientific education in France. In 1860, he wrote: "The object of our science is to banish 'Life' from the theories of organic chemistry."

The closing years of the nineteenth century, however, were destined to bring a series of discoveries that, as H. P. Blavatsky predicted in 1888, would give materialistic science a "death blow." (*S. D.* I, 612.) Between 1895 and 1897, the facts of radioactivity and the electronic constitution of the atom came into view, transforming matter into "merely an electrical phenomenon which electricity may exhibit more or less according to circumstances." Within forty years, physiologists were writing books to prove the identity of electricity and the life force. In physics, the consequences of the discovery of the electron are provided in a generalization by Dr. Einstein:

> . . . matter represents vast stores of energy and that energy represents matter. . . . Matter is where the concentration of energy is great, field is where the concentration of energy is small. But if this is the case, then the difference between matter and field is a quantitative rather than a qualitative one. There is no sense in regarding matter and field as two qualities quite different from each other. We cannot imagine a definite surface separating distinctly field and matter.[2]

What, then, *is* matter? Quite evidently, in modern physical theory, it isn't any "thing" at all, and this is essentially why modern physics is so incomprehensible for the man in the street. As William Ellis remarks: "What gives the generalized theory of relativity at once its fascination for the physicist by instinct and the repellent character it has for the average non-scientific man is that it seems to eliminate the ultimate 'irrational' stuff, 'first matter' from scientific theory."

The general effect of this development on scientific philosophy forms the subject of a just published book, *Between Physics and*

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[2] *The Evolution of Physics*, 1938, p. 257.

Philosophy, by Philipp Frank, a visiting lecturer at Harvard. A reviewer in *Science* (Sept. 26) gives its theme:

> After the reign of materialism and naturalism in the nineteenth century, our twentieth century shows a trend away from these movements, . . . in which the emphasis on the irrational and on metaphysics, the idealistic and spiritualistic interpretation of nature and history are recognized more and more as the prominent features of this century.

But while this current of transition is gaining strength, the materialists are rebuilding their defenses around the concept of *force.* Although matter has disappeared, has "dissolved," so to say, into electricity, we still have materialism to deal with. Chapman Cohen, a brilliant exponent of modern materialism, states the foundations of its present position:

> The essence of the Materialistic conception is that all the changes in this world of ours, physical, chemical, biological, and psychological, are strictly deterministic in character. The one thing that would be fatal to Materialism would be the necessity for assuming a controlling and directing intelligence at any part of the cosmic process. . . . the essential issue is whether it is possible, or is even likely to be possible, to account for the whole range of natural phenomena in terms of the composition of forces. That is the principle for which Materialism has always stood. By that principle it stands or falls. . . . It is a mere historical accident that Materialism should have been tied up with a particular conception of matter and the atom . . . the shattering of our conception of the nature of the atom, or of matter, is, to Materialism, of no consequence whatever.[8]

The objection to any sort of "controlling and directing intelligence" behind the cosmic process, arose, of course, entirely as a reaction to Christian theology, in which the personal god of the Bible was the sole manipulator of cosmic events. The determination to seek for an explanation of natural phenomena in terms of blind forces still dominates the theoretical forefront of modern physics, scientists still believing that the admission of unseen intelligences would open the door to witchcraft and superstition. Dr. Einstein, in the article quoted at the head of this discussion, expressed his determination to go on seeking the "direct representation of physical reality in time and space," despite the admitted obstacles and difficulties. Today, as in 1888, "The 'extra cosmic' God has killed every possibility of belief in *intra* cosmic intelligent Forces." (*S. D.* I, 529.) Dr. Einstein would like to be able to write an equation that would combine both gravitational and electromagnetic phenomena in one grand formula—the "unified field theory." But even were he

[8] *Materialism Re-Stated,* London, 1927, 34-5, 55.

to achieve this, we would still know nothing about the purpose and meaning of nature in terms of consciousness and human ideals, and this, after all, is the great objective of life.

While it is true that several eminent physicists are now speculating about universal "mind-stuff," such conceptions play only a poetic part in the modern scientific world-view. As working scientists, they still pursue the illusive dream of physical reality, unresponsive to the appeal of *The Secret Doctrine:*

> Accept the explanations and teachings of Occultism, and, the blind inertia of physical Science being replaced by the *intelligent active* Powers behind the veil of matter, motion and inertia become subservient to those Powers. It is on the doctrine of the illusive nature of matter, and the infinite divisibility of the atom, that the whole science of Occultism is built. It opens limitless horizons to *substance* informed by the divine breath of its soul in every possible state of tenuity, states still undreamed of by the most spiritually disposed chemists and physicists (I, 520).

Yet Physics has at least reached the half-way house between Materialism and Occultism. Denying intelligence to cosmic processes, it nevertheless admits the "infinite divisibility of the atom," for, as H. P. B. pointed out, "infinite divisibility of atoms resolves matter into simple centers of force," which is the definition of matter given by Dr. Einstein.

Turning to Biology, we find a textbook on the cell, published less than thirty years after the discoveries of 1895-7, detailing their revolutionary effect on that science:

> The discovery that atoms consist of a number of electrical charges, positive and negative; that every oxidation is an electric current . . . ; the refinement and clarification of ideas of energy and its transfer . . . , with resulting changes in the configuration of molecules and the very atoms; . . . —all of these have vastly aided the biochemist to make some approach to the solution of the problem of cell life. . . . He sees that life and electricity are indissolubly associated, since every atom is a system of electrons; every transfer of energy, and energy itself, is but so much electric current and magnetic flux. The body appears to him essentially as a battery. . . . The water, the salts, the graphite, *i.e.,* the carbon compounds of which it is composed, make the living battery. Rignano has even gone so far as to liken the storage of memories to the storage of potential electricity in a storage battery; and Crile (1923) has likened the brain to a self-charging condenser. The biochemist, indeed, has been transformed into an electrical engineer, . . .[4]

[4] Albert P. Mathews, in *General Cytology,* edited by Edmund V. Cowdry, 1924, pp. 15-16.

While physicists continue to hope for a "physical" representation of reality, the biologists—or rather "some" biologists—are too well acquainted with the miracles of organic processes to believe in this possibility for the life sciences. Dr. Albert P. Mathews, from whose discussion of the chemistry of cells the above passage is quoted, goes on to point out:

> But even when we have a reasonably clear picture of these physical things, we cannot make a complete explanation of the chemistry of the cell until we know another and equally important factor which is at present wholly neglected by the chemist and physicist, namely, the psychic element which is the most characteristic, indeed, one might say, the characteristic thing in living organisms. . . . For who can doubt that those properties of the atoms which show themselves in the psychical phenomena of living things are also present in the same atoms in the inorganic form?
>
> We cannot understand chemistry, therefore, and certainly not biochemistry, the chemistry of cells, until the relation between material and psychic things is worked out. . . . We must not close our minds, but hold them open and look keenly at this great problem, this great unexplored mountain, looming so fortunately on the horizon before our successors; for it holds out to generations yet to come great possibilities for increase of knowledge. . . .
>
> Today in the description of the universe in time and space, a description which enables us to express all physical things in terms, or dimensions, of space and time, the very dimensions of psychism are omitted, because we do not know them. . . . We must leave out, because of our ignorance, the psychic side of chemical reactions. Our equations, therefore, will be as incomplete as if energy were omitted. The transformation of matter and energy alone can be considered, . . . which becomes hence like Hamlet with Hamlet left out. Let us not blind ourselves to this fact.[5]

Biologists, Dr. Mathews claims, must await the development of Psychology into a science.

The reluctance of the scientist to include the psychic factor in his working hypotheses is understandable, if not excusable. While there are known techniques for the study of energy and electricity in their various and interchangeable forms, who can suggest a method for studying, say, the mind-aspect of a piece of meteoric matter, or a carbon compound, or even a flowering plant? The psychic factor has been left unconsidered for so long in scientific theory that it will take many years for the generality of research workers to get familiar with even the *prospect* of such an investigation.

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[5] *General Cytology*, pp. 16-18.

Only when the fundamental reality of mind, as a universal principle in Nature, has been acknowledged as a metaphysical necessity, will scientists begin to conduct their researches along lines which are now regarded as blind alleys ending in walls inpenetrable to scientific method.

The first steps, however, have been taken by those pioneers of the age in transition who recognize mind as an independent reality, and admit their inability to define it in terms of physical and chemical processes. The only important obstacle to a general acceptance of this view is the personal God idea. When Jehovah is finally gone, then modern science will turn to philosophy. It is for this reason that theosophists ever refuse any sort of compromise with the God of theological Christianity. Honest Christians must rather be brought to realize that the materialism of the modern world, which they so deplore, is the direct consequence of their own belief in a personal God.

The nineteenth century was, to use a phrase of H. P. B.'s, "an age of great inspiration and unconscious productiveness," a surge of creative activity "invariably followed by an age of criticism and consciousness," the one affording material for the analyzing and critical intellect of the other. The first forty years of the twentieth century have been devoted to assimilating the implications of nineteenth century science, exhausting its possibilities and re-examining its assumptions. In both Physics and Biology, traditional strongholds of materialism, basic conceptions are being revised, old ideas subjected to the white light of impartiality. More than this, philosophical scientists are becoming aware of the crucial moral problems their theories have precipitated, and of all the considerations in the foreground of modern thought, the task of formulating an acceptable philosophy of life—a philosophy which will be compatible with both scientific facts and the moral requirements of human society—is now being urged as the most important of all. The next of these articles will be devoted to the scientific study of man, most backward of the sciences, yet which holds the key to every scientific mystery.

> Between speculative Atheism and idiotic anthropomorphism there must be a philosophical mean, and a reconciliation. The Presence of the Unseen Principle throughout all nature, and the highest manifestation of it on Earth—MAN, can alone help to solve the Problem, which is that of the mathematician whose *x* must ever elude the grasp of our terrestrial algebra (*S. D.* II, 555).

BODY AND SOUL

IN Man occurs a dual combination. On the one hand is a body, the elements of which are objective to him, though he knows them not, in the way they "know" themselves. It is impossible for us to see the countless cells and molecules moving about within the body, the glands secreting, the various organs performing their labors. We "know" these things only intellectually, because we have made pictures, dissected, operated, and observed. Yet we know we have power over this body, we know our thoughts and feelings; but the pain and pleasure which we feel as organisms, or persons, cannot be compared to the pain and pleasure felt by the individual cells of our bodies. We feel *total* impressions, messages conveyed by groups of lives, such as the arm, or the stomach; we "feel" a surface touched by a finger tip, yet whole areas of our bodies are utterly blind, as far as we are concerned, for they convey no sensation to us, of touch, of taste, or hot or cold. Man has gathered to himself the five senses, and the mind has made a glove to cover and protect them—the material body through which they channel. But how is he able to control the mute body so perfectly and easily? How has he taught the lives such lessons as permit him to see a variety of things, and from infinite sensations still produce but one conclusion? How have the mere elements of earth, so torpid and dull as found in the belly of Mother Earth, been so transformed that after entering the body of man they are able to perform elaborately specialized tasks? Iron, crude in the mine, or essential in man's blood stream, is the same element—in the one case, inert; in the other, touched by vital processes. Nothing in man's body is different at all from the same elements found by the chemist in the laboratory of earth. Yet the kind of life and kind of action possible to man's body cannot be compared to the life and action of oxygen or hydrogen or nitrogen, nor of all the elements put together mechanically in hundreds of thousands of combinations.

Man was not created a special soul for this special body. We cannot manufacture life; evolution is not a mechanical "manufacturing process." We are able to use and direct those elements which make up our bodies because through infinite time we have been engaged in evolution with all other "lives." The union of more highly evolved, more powerful degrees of intelligence with the whole gamut of degrees below, has occurred times without number, but only because of the common denominator of life and intelligence has it been possible

for the one to affect the other. The response and cause are on the inner plane; the effect is more and more highly evolved forms, greater and greater specialization, co-operation among groups of lives, the subordination of some, the greater differentiation of others, all reflecting inner "learning." Yet when the Teacher, the King, he who holds all these lives together, ruling the army and directing its march as a single unit—when this high being departs, and the synthesizing power is absent, the "lives" scurry back to the relatively inert, narrow, and limited fields of matter. Not till one knows the key to form and awakes from his dream of rest will the next body be built. No scientist can discover that key in his present theories, for it has not a mechanical external combination; it has to do with man's own ever active knowledge. We can never be told how the raising of the arm is effected: such knowledge has nothing to do with words or mechanical formulas.

Life, acting through the physical form of the tree, produces physical seeds. The process repeats itself endlessly. Yet the seed could not live if the elements failed to be yoked by the higher organic intelligence. The physical form of mankind produces always the physical seed. But that treasure which we lay up "in heaven" is the seed of our own inner experience. Through the body of the Mother are born seeds. Yet the souls of her children did not spring from her soul. She is none the less herself—an inviolate center of consciousness—though she has provided that physical birth. Nor can she ever give to her children the seeds of her experience. Much as we may long to pass on the lessons of our life, we recognize that each one must live his own life. No individual may learn for another, although he may influence and teach and be in his turn influenced and taught. Each individual *does* learn for himself, and his learning is not lost. We bring our seeds of character, our tendencies, our acquired capacities back with us, when we again come to inhabit new bodies, merging the physical seed and the earth in the process.

MARK OF GREATNESS

In every work of genius we recognise our own rejected thoughts: they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humoured inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

SCIENCE AND THE SECRET DOCTRINE

"The Stars Incline . . . ."

THE twentieth century is now launched into its fourth decade —a decade which may well see the onset of the least pleasant of H. P. Blavatsky's many prophecies concerning the course of Western civilization in this cycle. Agreeably to numerous other such prophecies, the signs of an impending precipitation of equal moral obfuscation in the "occult" and "psychic" realms are thickening daily. Mental telepathy, made "respectable" through adoption by orthodox science, its dubious past concealed under the new name of "extra-sensory perception"; gullible politicians in high places in our once more practical if less emotional national Capital, lending their ear to the dubious oracles personified by the modern fortune-teller; "love-charms" advertised in the interiors of taxis in that same Capital; a noted writer of the "great outdoors" now delving into the "great beyond" . . . : these are portents enough of the wave of psychic crazes due to rise in this decade, in full correspondence with the cycle of last century which began with the Fox sisters.

Of late one of the "occult" branches on the flourishing tree of psychism has come in for attention, expressed in no uncertain terms, from the less ethereal-minded of our modern scientists. While Astrology, certainly, is no new thing, its present vogue has reached a new proportion. Revival of the new-old "faith in the stars" brings ample cause for trepidation among those trying to educate the world in the solid ways of a dependable materialism, for indeed there is astrology in places high and low. Besides being a pseudo-intellectual pursuit for coteries of decadent culture, the rising tide of astrology has suffused the interstices between *Superman, Sordid Adventures,* the *Reader's Digest,* and the *Cosmopolitan,* on the newsstands, and has attracted the alarmed gaze of our scientific mentors. Two researchers recently contributed a survey of modern interest in astrology to the *Scientific Monthly* (March, 1941):

> Prominent among the strictly astrological magazines are: *American Astrology, Horoscope, Astrology Guide, Wynn's Astrology, World Astrology* and *Astro-Digest. American Astrology* is said to have a circulation in excess of 100,000. The average newsstand carries at least four or five different astrological magazines. The dime stores have succumbed to the astrological craze. Modern automatic scales produce tickets with the weight of the victim on one side and astrological advice on the back.

> Astrology has made considerable inroads in advertising. The Better Business Bureaus have exposed many of the schemes used by astrologers, but in spite of their effectiveness they have not succeeded in eliminating astrology as an aid to salesmanship.

These writers also mention the numerous newspaper columns and other public agencies which cater to the same taste. In general, a rather thorough study of the *superficial* history and practice of astrology has been made by them, and the *Scientific Monthly* article shows considerable internal evidence of an attempt to be fair. A most astonishing statement is made to the effect that there is hardly an astronomer of note who has not been asked to cast horoscopes! If this is true, Science may despair of popular education, and "occultists" harbor a left-handed hope that a public open to the wrong kind of occultism may at last open its eyes to the right kind—in preference to the abysmal materialism fashionable during the latest generations!

The Executive Counsel of the Society for Psychological Study of Social Issues has issued a statement which merits full reproduction from the *Scientific Monthly:*

> Psychologists find no evidence that astrology is of any value whatsoever as an indicator of past, present, or future trends in one's personal life or in one's destiny. Nor is there the slightest ground for believing that social events can be foretold by divinations of the stars. The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues therefore deplores the faith of a considerable section of the American public in a magical practice that has no shred of justification in scientific fact.
>
> The principal reason why people turn to astrology and to kindred superstitions is that they lack in their own lives the resources necessary to solve serious personal problems confronting them. Feeling blocked and bewildered they yield to the pleasant suggestion that a golden key is at hand—a simple solution—an ever present help in time of trouble. This belief is more readily accepted in times of disruption and crisis when the individual's normal safeguards against gullibility are broken down. When moral habits are weakened by depression or war, bewilderment increases, self-reliance is lessened, and belief in the occult increases.
>
> Faith in astrology or in any other occult practice is harmful in so far as it encourages an unwholesome flight from the persistent problems of real life. Although it is human enough to try to escape from the effort involved in hard thinking and to evade taking responsibility for one's own acts, it does no good to turn to magic and mystery in order to escape misery. Other solutions must be found by people who suffer from the frustations of poverty, from grief at the death of a loved one, or from fear of economic or personal insecurity.

> By offering the public the horoscope as a substitute for honest and sustained thinking, astrologers have been guilty of playing upon the human tendency to take easy rather than difficult paths. Astrologers have done this in spite of the fact that science has denied their claims and in spite of laws in some states forbidding the prophecies of astrology as fraudulent. It is against public interests for astrologers to spread their counsels of flight from reality.
>
> It is unfortunate that in the minds of many people astrology is confused with true science. The result of this confusion is to prevent these people from developing truly scientific habits of thought that would help them understand the natural, social, and psychological factors that are actually influencing their destinies. It is, of course, true that science itself is a long way from a final solution to the social and psychological problems that perplex mankind; but its accomplishments to date clearly indicate that men's destinies are shaped by their own actions in this world. The heavenly bodies may safely be left out of account. Our fates rest not in our stars but in ourselves.

This statement is by no means impeccable as to either fact or logic, but if one must choose between the attitude it represents and the practice of astrology as revealed in its current literature, the former is in many ways a more attractive view. And this as to *honest* astrologers. For the misdeeds of the openly fraudulent, reference may be had to "What Do You Think of Astrology?" in *Good Housekeeping,* November, 1940.

It may be added that the practice of having horoscopes cast for *pet animals,* lately prevalent among people with much too much money, certainly signalizes a new low in something or other. And to our observation, no practice on earth—with the possible exception of Hatha Yoga—will serve so well to entangle the feet of the victim in an inextricable net of phobias, as popular astrology. . . .

Surely, by now, however, every studious Theosophist knows that no cult so deeply seated in the race, so ineradicable, can be without some kind of foundation in fact. It is so with astrology. But to place the problem in orderly form, let us classify the different kinds of "astrology" which are discernible, using in some cases terms of our own for convenience.

1. THE ASTROLOGY OF INFLUENCES

In this system the stars and planets are supposed to shed mysterious influences, which incline the fortunes of men in one direction or another. This is untrue as to the stars, though the rays from certain stars can be employed by "those who know" in ways to produce effects

that would be called "magical" by the ignorant. As to the planets, the basic astrological contention is largely true. The sun and the planets form the heart and limbs of a vast circulatory *organism,* whose pulse transmits solar forces of vital import to animal and human life, only now beginning to be suspected by orthodox science. Space is full of these great currents, and the different planets are related to one another and the sun through them in highly individual ways. One day, we suspect, some of the phases of this mysterious network of the solar system may be made *physically* observable, in which case orthodox science will perceive the meaning of the *"knots of Fohat"* as applying to the genesis of the planets as well as of matter itself. Nor are these influences insignificant, for the life on any given planet depends on them for its existence and distinctive character.

But all this has little to do with the highly detailed and individualized fortunes of a particular man as set forth in a horoscope, much as it has to do with major trends both physical and psychological. As to the latter—in this Magazine for April, 1939 (XXVII, 254), is set forth the effect of the psycho-physical excitation that follows or accompanies periods of major solar activity.

The scientific writers above quoted, in this respect make one of the most surprising "bulls" that we have seen in any scientific publication:

> An interpretation of the rules laid down by astrologers demands the existence of an unimaginable mechanism of action. Astrologers have not provided us with as much as a sound hypothesis that might serve as a basis for their speculations. Astrologers attempt to offset this lack of a sound working hypothesis by the introduction of terms and concepts that are unknown to physicists and astronomers. No one, with a high school training in physics, should be fooled into accepting an explanation of the laws of astrology in which the term "cosmic vibration" figures prominently.

Assenting that "cosmic vibration" is merely a term to cover ignorance, we may point out that according to the same reasoning, the law of gravitation has no scientific status!

2. CHRONOLOGICAL ASTROLOGY

This system considers the positions of stars and planets as merely markers pointing the times of events which have been determined by cyclic forces of sundry kinds of another nature than planetary influences. The truth that lies behind astrology is largely to be sought in this direction, though the real "influences" heretofore mentioned contribute substantially to those cyclic trends.

3. BIOLOGICAL ASTROLOGY

A new development for which modern science can take most of the credit; it deals with the influence of solar changes on animal and human life, and has begun to extend itself farther—into the stock market, for instance. So far it has recognized just one major influence—that of changes in solar radiation accompanying the sun-spot cycle. But there are other solar changes of equal or as great importance, which will one day be recognized if this line is followed. Likewise one day the moon must be drawn in, and it will be found that the fragmentary popular "superstitions" about the moon have in most cases a sound basis in fact.

4. HINDU ASTROLOGY

A system which in many ways resembles the Occidental, but takes into account many of the points found objectionable in the latter by western science. Its demands as to accuracy of time and geographical position are meticulous; its mathematics elaborate, and its scope enormous. Every Hindu child of caste has his horoscope at birth. And if his life follows it often enough to perpetuate the system down the centuries, who is to say whether it is because the system is real, or because the individual himself, and all his family and his priestly influences strive unconsciously *to make sure that he does follow it?* Which is precisely where lie the danger and disaster in any system of popular astrology, false or true.

5. THE ASTROLOGY OF THE SECRET SCIENCES

The mother-system of which all others extant are reflections from broken shards. A system which can be used only by Adepts, and which is not, never has been, and never will be known to the general public or to those who sell the "occult" to it.

Unable to describe it, we can name two Adepts of widely differing degree who have used it: Nostradamus, and H. P. Blavatsky.

Those who think they can unravel the cryptic prophecies of Nostradamus *before the event,* are welcome to try; H. P. B.'s prophecies are more "in the open":

> . . . Ancient Wisdom added to the cold shell of astronomy the vivifying elements of its soul and spirit—ASTROLOGY. And, as the sidereal motions *do* regulate and determine other events on Earth—besides potatoes and the periodical disease of that useful vegetable—(a statement which, not being amenable to scientific explanation, is merely derided, while accepted)—those events have to be allowed to find themselves predetermined by even simple astronomical computations. Believers in astrology will understand our meaning, sceptics

will laugh at the belief and mock the idea. Thus they shut their eyes, ostrich-like to their own fate. . . . (*Secret Doctrine,* 1888, I, 645.)

What fate?

Yet in the prognostication of *such* future events, at any rate, all foretold on the authority of cyclic recurrences, there is no psychic phenomenon involved. It is neither *prevision, nor prophecy;* no more than is the signalling of a comet or star, several years before its appearance. It is simply knowledge and mathematically correct computations which enable the WISE MEN OF THE EAST to foretell, for instance, that England is on the eve of such or another catastrophe; France, nearing such a point of her cycle, and Europe in general threatened with, or rather, on the eve of, a cataclysm, which her own cycle of racial *Karma has led her* to (I, 646).

Thus what Kepler said, as a great astronomer, becomes comprehensible. He recognized the grand and universal importance of all such planetary conjunctions, "each of which"—as he has well said,—"is a *climacteric* year of Humanity." The rare conjunction of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars has its significance and importance on account of its *certain great results*—in India and China as much as it has in Europe for the respective mystics of all those countries. . . . The reader has to bear in mind that the phrase "climacteric year" has more than the usual significance, when used by Occultists and Mystics. It is not only a critical period, during which some great change is periodically expected, whether in human or cosmic constitution, but it likewise pertains to spiritual universal changes (I, 656).

Late in 1939, these three planets were in close proximity, and in February, 1940, all five of the "naked-eye" planets appeared at dusk, forming a descending line vertical to the western horizon. Later in 1940, Saturn and Jupiter were in conjunction. In connection with the "great results" referred to by H. P. B., it may be noted that in 1345, three years before the outbreak of the Black Plague in European countries (it began in the orient), a grand conjunction of Saturn, Jupiter and Mars took place in the sign of Aquarius. Dr. J. C. F. Hecker, a German physician of the early nineteenth century, relates that a learned writer of the period regarded this conjunction as "the chief general cause of the Black Plague," commenting: "Of the astral influence which was considered to have originated the '*Great Mortality,*' physicians and learned men were as completely convinced as of the fact of its reality." All were agreed "that conjunctions of the planets infallibly prognosticated great events; great revolutions of kingdoms, new prophets, destructive plagues, and other occurrences which bring distress and horror on mankind."*

* *The Epidemics of the Middle Ages,* translated by B. G. Babbington, London, 1846.

A further prophetic *Secret Doctrine* passage—or rather, statement of fact—occurs in "Cyclic Evolution and Karma":

> The Western Aryans had, every nation and tribe, like their Eastern brethren of the Fifth Race, their Golden and their Iron ages, their period of comparative irresponsibility, or the Satya age of purity, while now, several of them have reached their *Iron Age,* the *Kali Yuga,* an age BLACK WITH HORRORS . . . (I, 644-5).

At the end of this quotation is an excision; indicating that much more might be said—probably *was* said in the original draft. But—"sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." (For further discussion of which, see "Direful Prophecies" by Mr. Judge, reprinted in THEOSOPHY for August, 1940.)

Some perplexing ethical issues are raised by certain attitudes of the scientific associations regarding astrology. One important association of scientific workers has advocated that not only astrology, but "all forms of occultism," should be forbidden.

Despite much outcry against the "totalitarian" governments by scientific societies whose particular oxen have been gored, there has never been the slightest sign of moderation or restraint among scientific men when presented with an opportunity to enforce upon the public dictatorial regulations in the fields of which they consider themselves masters. As witness the matter of compulsory immunization. The average scientific man has absolutely no conception of an *abstract* right to freedom; to him, freedom of opinion in a matter having to do with physical welfare is permissible only where uncertainty still exists. Once science has spoken, the recalcitrant is merely an anti-social or atavistic unit who must be compelled for his own good as well as that of his fellows. Anti-vaccination and anti-vivisection literature would be suppressed tomorrow if the scientific societies had a free hand. Therefore such anti-"occult" pronouncements could well be reason for grave disquiet, were it not that scientific influence now seems on the wane rather than otherwise, and the peril is now rather from some back-wash of religious fanaticism which may follow World War II.

Currently, one of the worst forms of "occultism," hypnotism, is practiced in science itself.

From the point of view of the immediate public good, we could not well object to proscription of all teachings pretending to confer occult power and privileges for a fee. Unfortunately, however, abrogation of the right of the gullible to learn by being gulled—the only manner in which they *will* learn—carries with it grave dangers to the liberties of those "who look into the principles of things," as well.

"What, then, will restraint effect?"

AMONG YOUTH-COMPANIONS

"It is the Master's work to preserve the true philosophy, but the help of the companions is needed to rediscover and promulgate it."

AT every center of Theosophical activity will be found some "Youth-Companions," younger students of Theosophy who, by their rediscovery of ancient truths, are drawn more and more to undertake the work of promulgation. As "Youth-Companions," they are engaged in the study and application that will make them fit for this task. They gather at the Lodge Rooms, in Associate Pathfinders, at each other's homes, the current of their common thought ever bringing to their meetings, casual or planned, a larger purpose than any merely "social" motive. The scenes of their activities are many—in California, New York, Philadelphia, and other communities in America and across the seas. Few or many, they are companions all in searching out the meanings behind the words of the philosophy, learning to see in life's circumstances the opportunity that the Theosophical perspective always reveals.

"Among Youth-Companions" is an endeavor to suggest and illustrate the spirit of these undertakings. Fittingly, the "story," told by Youth-Companions themselves, begins in California, the home of the Parent United Lodge of Theosophists. Its unfolding will find paths to other places and scenes—wherever "Youth-Companions" are and may go.

The sun was shining with considerable enthusiasm, giving assurance that a California summer had finally arrived, when King parked his car in front of Theosophy Hall and considered the academic question of whether or not his participation in Theosophy School discussion would be more satisfactory had he risen later or gone to bed earlier. Unquestionably, he was early this morning, although before he had time to pocket the key to his car he perceived at a distance the measured advance of his newly-found friend, Max, walking from the bus stop at the the end of the street. "Wonder what brought him here before 10:30," he speculated. "He seems to me too methodical to be affected by the kind of spring fever that wakes you up with the birds and puts you to sleep in the afternoon."

Max's wide smile and greeting were a preface to the very logical explanation that followed. Said Max, "I knew we couldn't finish our talking about reincarnation in the class, so I thought I would see if there is anyone to talk with before we have the program."

Suddenly, the significance of this penetrated: it was the last Sunday of Theosophy School, and, except for the Get-Together Meeting on schedule for that day, the study and discussion group was ready to disband for the summer.

King started to pick up the thread of last week's discussion with Max, but in the long pauses offered by his friend's careful deliberation before a reply was ventured, he was thinking in general terms about the class discussions in which he had participated during the past nine months. Although he had always believed in reincarnation, really *studying* all that it implied in the light of Theosophy was new to him. He tried to determine whether he would welcome the temporary release for the summer from its voluntary intellectual discipline, as he undeniably did from the not too arduous task of acquiring a degree from the nearby university. It was a little difficult for King to be honest with himself when several parts of his nature seemed to be saying different things at the same time, but, the anticipation of fishing trips and the beach notwithstanding, it certainly seemed at the moment as if he would greatly prefer a continuation of the discussion group. He wondered what Max thought and interrupted the conversation to ask him. Said Max:

"Well, I don't know enough yet of Theosophy at all. I think this summer I will come to some of the evening question meetings."

King thought this over. "Maybe that would be a good idea. I don't know about you, but I feel as if my mind is just beginning to really get somewhere important. That 'growth of mind' business is something everybody should try to keep up. The only trouble is, I seem to want informal discussions right now, on the things brought up in the *Ocean* and *Friendly Philosopher,* where you can follow each idea through as far as you want. There are too many people for that at the night meetings."

On his way into the Hall the germ of an idea suddenly crowded into King's mind. Why not start a discussion group to carry on during the summer! One of the class teachers to whom he earnestly put the question, as he sat down beside him, said:

"Well, King, it's a tough job to make something like that really work, but, if you can, it would be good for all of you. Every individual U. L. T. Lodge had its beginning in just such a spontaneous way. Why don't you try out the idea on some of the class and see what the reaction is, though?"

The regular attendants were now filtering in and King turned to the attractive and unpredictable young lady who had just taken her seat.

"Gail, don't let this stagger you, but I have just been thinking. It seems to me that though all of us have had a lot to say in class, there wasn't time to work it all out, and it's too bad we have to stop. Well, what would you think about organizing a little group on our own to continue where we left off? I mean," he added, as Gail eyed him speculatively, "the whole group. There would probably be at least five or six who would like the idea." Her reply was brief, but enthusiastic. "Count me in," she said.

Quickly the proposition went its round, and in a few minutes it had been arranged that Max, Dave, Alayne, Janice, Gail, Martinez, and King would meet the following week and make a beginning. King, it seemed, could offer ample room and a central location at his home.

On the appointed evening each member of the class arrived without mishap or delay, King's mother welcoming them graciously to the comfortable wood-paneled living room. As King stood before the fireplace mechanically filling his pipe, he suggested that all make themselves heard with suggestions as to the future conduct and character of their gathering. Dave spoke up promptly: "Out of deference to the genius who got this thing started, I think we'd all like to hear your ideas first. Then we'll add or subtract by majority rule."

"Well, I *have* been thinking about it a lot. The more I think, the more enthusiastic I am, and I'll tell you why. It has come home to me that we make up an interesting group. We represent different nationalities and backgrounds, and though our thinking processes are probably entirely unlike, we seem to be all together in our respect for a Theosophical viewpoint and a desire to use it constructively. I've been thinking that any hope for future harmony in the world at large must come from just such an agreement on Theosophical principles as our deciding to meet together represents in a small way. So, as a group we're unique, and I think we ought to guard and protect that uniqueness, first of all, by refusing to relax into just 'good social company.' I mean, no beach parties, dancing, etc., because, if we did, we'd have little personal situations within the group which would get our purposes generally confused. That wouldn't interfere with our being as informal as possible, but why not make the most of our time? I myself am in favor of a two-hour period for each meeting, with prompt beginnings and endings, and in this respect I think we ought to be 'formal.' I don't know if we want to make any particular rules or not, but the main thing, I think, is to take up problems of central importance and really give them a thorough going over. I figure that through this we will all get to know each other better

than in any other way, and at the end have something of a consolidation of the best thinking. Now let's hear from everybody else."

Since there seemed to be spontaneous assent to these suggestions, Janice remarked that as far as she could see King had summed up the general situation about the way they all saw it. "But," she added, "I would like to suggest one thing. I think we ought to have something definite to study before each meeting, and that this should be a section out of one of the Theosophical texts."

"Yes," said Gail, "I think we need to have plenty of substance so that our discussions don't grow thin. There's no use in just getting interested in hearing ourselves talk, because if we do, we won't get anywhere. On the other hand, I think it would be good if we had a lot of opportunity to talk over social and economic problems. They're real substance too. But, do you have something in mind, Dave, to begin with?"

"Well, I brought along some pamphlets for tonight. Why not read something first, to get solid ground under our feet? Then, next week, it might be a good idea to take the first chapter of Judge's *Ocean* for the same reason, and to give us an understanding of how he tried to 'begin things' himself. If we are going to really study Theosophy, it must be important to see how the Teachers did their work and what they were trying to accomplish with students. King, why don't you handle things this time and we'll see how it goes? We can begin as you suggested and then read from the pamphlet, going on from there."

"All right, then, let's have a volunteer statement of the Three Fundamentals from someone. How about you, Max?"

Max appeared embarassed. "I think I would rather wait yet until next week anyway," he said.

"All right, you have it for next week. How about you, Martinez? I was about to call you the voice of Latin America," King added. "And I don't mean to sound flippant, because I was seriously thinking how important a work Theosophists must eventually have among those of Spanish blood who make up the larger proportion of the Southern Americas."

Martinez, like Max before him, strove to conceal a blush, but being of a more adventurous temperament than his Teutonic friend, he undertook to begin. His remarks were concise and yet each one of his statements had originality, which, together with his naïve ways of expression, immediately absorbed the interest of the group.

After reading and discussion of some paragraphs in the pamphlet, questions were called for on how to apply what had been read.

"How about this," said Alayne. "I would like to know what everybody thinks happiness is, and just how it should be striven for according to Theosophy."

"Well, according to Theosophy," said Dave, "if you strive for it, you'll never find it."

Janice nodded approval.

"But that sounds like convents and asceticism," protested Gail, with a slight show of impatience.

"I think, myself, everybody is striving for happiness," said King, "maybe even the greatest Theosophists, but doesn't it all depend on how you define the word? Let me try. That which makes us 'happy' is that which is congenial to our nature, but we are not one nature—we are two. Therefore, the fundamental problem seems to be to bring all the different parts of us into harmony and find that which is congenial to our highest nature, so that we gradually bring the lower nature into line. You have to begin one way or the other, and the sad angle of it is that either way you jump, high or low, the other part gets plenty peeved. When the lower nature yells 'I'm being robbed,' you can answer, 'Shut up! I'm going to improve your tastes and finally make you happy too, in spite of your disposition'."

"Well, I see what you mean," said Alayne. "But I think it all comes down to whether you realize you can't be happy unless you want the same things for everyone else."

"Everybody wants something different," questioned Max, "so how can you give them all the same?"

"H. P. B. says," said Dave, " 'The Path is one for all. The means to reach the goal must vary with the pilgrims.' The principles could be the same, yet the applications still be different."

"I remember something from the *Voice,"* offered Janice, "that maybe describes the only pure and lasting kind of happiness. 'His mind, like a becalmed and cloudless ocean, spreadeth out in shoreless space. He holdeth life and death in his strong hand.' "

"That describes a man who no longer has two parts of his nature fighting like cats and dogs," said King. "It doesn't apply to us right now. For instance, Max pointed out that you can't give people the same ideas or the same anything. Lots of them don't want Theosophy, and yet we have been suggesting that it is only through a Theosophical outlook that real happiness can be found. Therefore, it would seem as if the people who talk about finding happiness don't want it bad enough to look for it the hard way. Of course, that doesn't make sense," he added with a grin.

"Could it maybe be that since happiness is harmony or balance, many men don't know enough about what they are to know *what* to balance up?" ventured Martinez. And Max nodded his head.

"I guess that's the answer," said King, "and that must be why we've heard so much in class of how important it is to study man's seven principles."

"Why does it need to be so complicated?" asked Gail. "As far as I can tell they are only two—good and bad."

"What do you say, Max?" said King, eyeing his quiet though attentive friend, whose silence still continued, giving everyone the impression that there couldn't be anything bad in Max, so how could he know from experience about the dual nature, anyway?

This thought crossed Alayne's mind and gave her an idea. "I think most people act on impulse. According to Theosophy this could be either emotion or intuition, but how would anyone have a chance of finding out which, unless he knew they were two separate things and kept watching out for them?"

"There is another angle to this," said King. "Would you say, Dave, that Madame Blavatsky was a happy person?"

"I don't think she cared about that," said Dave.

"Yes, but was she happy, regardless of that?"

"It seems to me that you could almost tell by looking at her picture," said Janice, "that she was always calm and undisturbed inside."

"Calmness?" queried Gail. "I guess that *is* what we need. It may not be happiness, but even if it isn't, that's what I would like to settle for. It doesn't need to mean you experience things any the less, but only you know what to do with experiences when they happen. I want to know something else, though. The idea of Theosophy seems to be that more and more knowledge brings the right kind of happiness. Yet lots of people say the less they know the happier they are. They certainly seem to be happier than I am most of the time."

Something momentous occurred. Max made a long speech. "I think I got an idea," he said. "I think people like that can only be happy for a while, and then something tells them they have to learn more. Like me, even."

"Well, there we are again at the old dual nature of man," said King. "Remember it was suggested in class that the whole of *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* were to illuminate that point?"

"Hey, it's ten o'clock," Dave spoke up.

"I guess two hours isn't any too much," said King. "Next week let's all come with a special problem to use for the discussion period."

THE "TWO-SIDED" EGO

QUESTION: Two inferences may be drawn from Theosophical writings with regard to the Ego of man: one, that the Ego is a direct incarnation of a god descended from a higher plane to take up its abode in the human form evolved for its use by Nature; the other, that the Ego is latent until the body is sufficiently evolved, when the Ego gradually awakens to activity. While aware that there is only an apparent contradiction, I should be glad to see the two conceptions reconciled.

W. Q. J.—Unless the questioner has some special and peculiar meaning for "direct incarnation," there does not appear to be any actual or apparent contradiction between the two inferences stated. What the special meaning is I do not know. Assume that the Ego is a "god on a higher plane," and there is no impossibility in supposing that, coming to this plane, it is so surrounded by the clouds of matter as to become latent or hidden until the time when the form suitable for this plane is evolved. This is the only sort of latency which can be alleged of the Ego. This also is what Theosophical writings say to me, and among those writings I place the *Bhagavad Gita*. In that, Krishna, the Supreme Being, identifies himself with *Ishwara,* who is the Ego "seated in the hearts of all beings." Patanjali also says the same, naming that Ego, who is the Spectator of all things, by the name *Om* or Lord of Glory. The *Secret Doctrine* continues the same view. The Christian view and Theosophy must also agree, since Jesus, in exhorting his disciples to be as perfect as the Father in heaven, must have had in view the doctrine that the Father dwelt in and is Man: otherwise we could not become perfect as he is. I therefore do not see the need for reconciling contradictions which do not exist.

The Ego—meaning thereby the Self, Ishwara, Krishna, the Supreme—is unborn, changeless, all-knowing. It knows evolving Nature, the instrument, but the latter comes but slowly to a knowledge of the Self. It is therefore latent only in the sense that there are periods when the instrument, the false personality, recognizes it not. Such a period is the present, when although the body has been evolved by Nature—with the aid of the Ego—we do not know the Ego. Why not, then, if the inferences of the question are right, apply them to the present time? If thus applied, then, under the position thus taken, the Ego is still latent and will be until *Manas* is fully developed in a succeeding round.

NOTE: This article first appeared in the *Theosophical Forum,* December, 1894.

To assume that the Ego is latent until Nature has had time to evolve the suitable form is to give to Nature power and consciousness which we withhold from the Ego. Why, then, not call Nature the Ego and do away altogether with the latter? Or you would have to assume *a* God beyond and above both Nature and Ego. The universe is either self-existent or it was projected into existence by some being whom we will call God. The Ego either was created by this God or is this God in itself. If the universe was not projected but is self-existent, then it and the Ego are one—God. Hence Nature in "evolving a body" which the Ego chooses to use is only showing forth the action of one of the powers of that Ego. But we can never solve the question of why the Universe or the Ego chooses to have two sides or ends, the negative and positive. All we know is that it must be so. The negative is—Nature, qualities, false personality, matter; the positive is—God, Ego, Spirit, Life.

Nirvana and Spiritual Evolution

Note:—Ordinarily, a man is said to reach Nirvana when he evolutes into a Dhyan Chohan. The condition of a Dhyan Chohan is attained in the ordinary course of Nature, after the completion of the 7th round in the present planetary chain. After becoming a Dhyan Chohan, a man does not according to the Law of Nature, incarnate in any of the other planetary chains of this Solar system. The whole Solar system is his home. He continues to discharge his duties in the Government of this Solar system until the time of Solar Pralaya, when his monad, after a period of rest, will have to *overshadow* in another Solar system a particular human being during his successive incarnations, and attach itself to his higher principles when he becomes a Dhyan Chohan in his turn. There is progressive spiritual development in the innumerable Solar systems of the infinite cosmos. Until the time of Cosmic Pralaya, the Monad will continue to act in the manner above indicated, and it is only during the inconceivable period of cosmic sleep which follows the present period of activity, that the highest condition of Nirvana is realized. We further beg to inform our correspondent in this connection that our Mahatmas have not yet affirmed that there are exactly 7 planetary chains in this Solar system.—Ed.

—*Theosophist,* July, 1884.

ON THE LOOKOUT

Medical Problems

The psychologists of the twentieth century, H. P. Blavatsky predicted in 1887, "will have some extra work to do." During the cycle which began at the close of the first 5,000 years of Kali Yuga, in 1897-8, "the psychic idiosyncrasies of humanity," she said, "will enter upon a great change," and she urged American theosophists to "*watch therefore carefully* this development, inevitable in your race and evolution-period." Writing on "Problems Confronting Medical Investigators," in *Science* for Aug. 22, Dr. Walter B. Cannon of the Harvard Medical School details several consequences of "this development," although he is far from understanding their causes. Modern life in our thoroughly industrialized society, he believes, accounts for the "severe demands on the nervous system, which have become progressively more severe in the recent past." Noting that since 1900, cities have gained from the farms more than 30 millions of inhabitants, Dr. Cannon sees that more and more of the population have become entangled "in the widespread web of dependency" produced by our economic system. (Three million more will move to cities in the near future, to fill jobs in defense industries, Labor Department statisticians estimate.) Following are some of the results of this concentration of population in industrial centers:

> Labor strikes, business failures and revolutionary inventions involve familial tragedies of lost jobs, wrecked plans and broken homes. The intense drive and pressure of the new life, its worries and its dreads, place a burden upon men and women which often is too great to be borne. The strain is mirrored in the rise of the suicide rate of the United States during the years of excitement and depression near the beginning of the last decade. It went steadily upward until, in 1932, it was over 50 per cent higher than during the five years after the first World War. That rise meant an increase of more than 6,000 suicides in 1932 alone.

Epidemic of Emotional Ills

After pointing out the remarkable decrease in infectious diseases since the turn of the century (a trend examined in detail in the pamphlet, *Laws of Healing,* pp. 44-5), Dr. Cannon admits the inability of medical science to deal with the rising tide of nervous disorders:

> The technique required for understanding nervous influences is novel and not well developed. A disorder of the brain may fail to reveal itself at the autopsy table or under the microscope. And yet emotional upsets, which leave in the nervous pathways no visible trace, have concrete and obvious effects, and may be the occasion for

profound misery and suffering. Obsessive fears disturb or interrupt digestion, alarmingly accelerate the heart, send the blood pressure oscillating in hot flushes or impress a deep and stubborn sense of agitation. The poor patient, not finding sympathy and interest elsewhere, may take his troubles to faith healers or to other cultists who are attentive and who confidently promise aid. It is stupid to belittle or neglect such complaints. The powerful influence which emotional states can exert on bodily functions needs no argument. The ways in which the processes of the brain produce disturbances, however, are little comprehended; and the devices which might be employed for prevention or cure have not received the scientific attention which their importance demands. The problems which are posed are especially difficult because, in the brain more than in any other organ, man differs from the lower animals. It will probably be necessary, therefore, that medical investigators of the neuroses, while maintaining a firm basis in physiology, shall rely on the clinic in order to find subjects for their research.

Increase of Insanity

If doctors will stop studying animals in order to understand human disease, this will be no small compensation for the ravages of psychism! Dr. Cannon next turns to the spread of insanity:

Closely associated with the mysteries of nervous instability is the most complex of all medical problems, that of mental derangement. The custodial care of the insane has immeasurably improved since St. Mary's of Bethlehem in London gave the English language the word "bedlam," and decades have passed since the wretched victims of a diseased mind were chained in outhouses and treated like wild animals. Nevertheless, in the great asylums custodial care continues to be almost the only type of treatment. And meanwhile the problem grows constantly greater and more startling. The numbers of the mentally afflicted who have been safeguarded by the State of New York rose from 390 per 100,000 in 1920 to 525 in 1938, an increase of nearly 35 per cent in 18 years. And the appalling fact is now disclosed that as the age range lengthens, there are more and more mental victims for whom protection is necessary. For example, between 1912 and 1936 the population over 40 years of age in the United States rose about 6 per cent. During that period the first admissions of patients over 40 years of age into the mental hospitals increased from about 8 to 49 per 100,000, an increase of more than 500 per cent.

Extent of Mental Illness Today

Half of the hospital accommodations of the country are devoted to the insane; and it is estimated that one-fifth of all hospital beds are

occupied by sufferers from a single mental disorder, schizophrenia. Hundreds of millions of dollars are spent every year—New York alone voted more than thirty-one millions in 1938—mainly to provide a place of refuge for the mentally diseased. Wards are extended and new buildings are erected in order to accommodate the growing numbers. Meanwhile, only relatively trifling sums are being devoted by the states to learn preventive measures by which the incidence of mental derangements may be lessened, or to discover methods which could be used to treat these derangements effectively.

The "stupendous" importance of these problems of psychiatry, Dr. Cannon urges, calls for "the labors of many well-disciplined medical investigators, devoted to research in this field." It may be wondered how much longer the medical fraternity will scoff at the occult explanation of mental and psychic disorders—how many must be the sacrifices to scientific scepticism and conceit, before, driven to desperation, psychiatrists and other students of abnormal psychology give their attention to the warning offered by H. P. Blavatsky to American theosophists in 1891:

> Psychism, with all its allurements and all its dangers, is necessarily developing among you, and you must beware lest the Psychic outruns the Manasic and Spiritual development. Psychic capacities held perfectly under control, checked and directed by the Manasic principle, are valuable aids in development. But these capacities running riot, controlling instead of controlled, using instead of being used, lead the Student into the most dangerous delusions and the certainty of moral destruction.

SIDELIGHT ON "DEFENSE"

Dr. F. H. Zimmerman, superintendent of the Colorado State Hospital, reports that since the national defense program hit its stride, there has been a marked increase in the number of mental cases received at his institution, and that many of these cases were found to be directly due to conditions arising out of the "national emergency." Listing nine reasons why mental strain is resulting from the effort toward national defense, Dr. Zimmerman anticipates further mental breakdowns. (Los Angeles *Examiner,* Sept. 25.) *Time* for Aug. 4 contained the following news on mental health in the army:

> Army doctors are completely in the dark about the mental health of recruits. A large amount of mental disease cropped up in the A.E.F., prompting General Pershing to wire home: Stop sending over the mentally unfit. Even with thorough-going psychiatric examinations, 10% of the volunteers inducted in 1940, according to the Army's chief psychiatric adviser, Dr. Leonard Rowntree, showed signs of insanity after reaching camp.

It should be noted that this astounding ratio has reference only to volunteers; mental unfitness among the drafted men is doubtless in general proportion to the total population. More recently (Los Angeles *Times,* Oct. 4), Dr. Rowntree declared that approximately *half* the men called in the Draft must be rejected for physical or mental defects, and President Roosevelt has announced an investigation to survey this serious condition.

Crime Wave in 1941

The social insanity of crime has also been running amok in America. *Uniform Crime Reports,* an FBI publication, reveals that murders increased 7.6 per cent during the first half of 1941, as compared with the same period in 1940. Dr. Wilson Schaffer, Johns Hopkins psychologist, offers the following statement in explanation:

> The increase of crime in times of war or the threat of war is the result of the changed mental attitudes of many members of the populace. The tendency to perform criminal acts is apparently present in a great many more cases than are manifest. But in times of stress there is liable to be a greater personal irresponsibility—a letting down of inhibitions (Los Angeles *Examiner,* Sept. 7).

This relaxation of moral restraint is accounted for by the fact that when war threatens, the future is unpredictable, leading to a recklessness which takes little thought of consequences. Another evidence of nation-wide moral decline, the more serious for its implications concerning the home, is reported in *Newsweek* for Sept. 1:

> The FBI reported that arrests of women for drunkenness increased 35.4 per cent in the first half of 1941 over the same period in 1940. Female arrests for all causes rose 16.8 per cent, drunken driving was up 38.3 per cent, criminal homicide 17.2 per cent, and burglary 20.3 per cent.

"The World Is Insane"

Discussing the psychic proclivities that were to manifest in the future—our present—H. P. Blavatsky remarked that their danger would be "aggravated enormously by the pressure of competition and the struggle for existence." The present crime wave is rooted in these underlying tendencies of western civilization, and the immediate causes pointed out by the majority of psychologists and sociologists are but superficial explanations. Here and there, however, one finds a correct diagnosis, although the treatment recommended is seldom more than vague generalization. Dr. Edward A. Strecker, professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, muses on the great social problems confronting the modern world:

> Seriously, the world is sick economically, politically, culturally, and ethically. Above all, it is spiritually sick. It is not too much to say that, judged by the criteria of mental illness, the world is insane. A shadow has fallen across the face of our civilization and our cultures. It is the shadow of the Gargantuan figure of Crowd-minded Mass Man. (*Mental Hygiene,* October, 1940.)

"MORAL AND OCCULT INFLUENCES"

What is this "mass man," but the victim of psychism? "Our Fifth Race," H. P. B. wrote in *The Secret Doctrine,* "is rapidly approaching the Fifth Element—call it interstellar ether, if you will—which has more to do with psychology than with physics." (II, 135.) This is further explained in *Isis Unveiled:*

> . . . what can . . . [Science] know of the moral and occult influences that may be exercised by the celestial bodies on men and their destiny? . . . Almost nothing is known of the laws of magnetism and the other imponderable agents; almost nothing of their effect upon our bodies and minds; even that which is known and moreover perfectly demonstrated, is attributed to chance, and curious *coincidences.* But we do know, by these coincidences, that "there are periods when certain diseases, propensities, fortunes, and misfortunes of humanity are more rife than at others." There are times of epidemic in moral and physical affairs. In one epoch "the spirit of religious controversy will arouse the most ferocious passions of which human nature is susceptible, provoking mutual persecution, bloodshed, and wars; at another, an epidemic of resistance to constituted authority will spread over half the world (as in the year 1848), rapid and simultaneous as the most virulent bodily disorder."
>
> Again, the collective character of mental phenomena is illustrated by an anomalous psychological condition invading and dominating over thousands upon thousands, depriving them of everything but automatic action, and giving rise to the popular opinion of demoniacal possession, an opinion in some sense justified by the satanic passions, emotions, and acts which accompany the condition. At one period, the aggregate tendency is to retirement and contemplation; hence, the countless votaries of monachism and anchoretism; at another the mania is directed toward *action,* having for its proposed end some utopian scheme, equally impracticable and useless; hence, the myriads who have forsaken their kindred, their homes, and their country, to seek a land whose stones were gold, or to wage war for the possession of worthless cities and trackless deserts (I, 273-4).

THE ONLY ANTIDOTE

Contrasted with the malign influences so evident from their catastrophic effect are those "other tendencies" referred to by H. P. B.,

which, more than any other place in the world, have their home in America:

> Your Karma as a nation has brought Theosophy home to you. The life of the Soul, the psychic side of nature, is open to many of you. The life of altruism is not so much a high ideal as a matter of practice. Naturally, then, Theosophy finds a home in many hearts and minds, and strikes a resounding harmony as soon as it reaches the ears of those who are ready to listen. . . . We are outwardly creatures of but a day; within we are eternal. Learn, then, well the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, and teach, practice, promulgate that system of life and thought which alone can save the coming races.

The world, admits Dr. Strecker, is above all *spiritually* sick. Let us work, then, above all, toward a spiritual regeneration, "for its *practical* realization alone can save the Western world from that selfish and unbrotherly feeling that now divides race from race, one nation from the other; and from that hatred of class and social considerations that are the curse and disgrace of so-called Christian peoples."

An Important Decision

On July 25 of this year, the Supreme Court of Missouri unanimously ruled that the public school funds of that state cannot be used to support religious schools, regardless of the circumstances. The case settled by this decision arose in the town of Meta, where St. Cecelia School, a parochial institution of the Roman Catholic Church, had, by conforming with certain regulations, become incorporated into the public school system. A similar practice prevailed in other small Missouri communities. According to the Masonic *Supreme Council, 33°, Bulletin* for Aug. 15, "While state prescribed texts were used and state course requirements met, nuns taught while clothed in their religious garb, and the parish priest instructed the children in the Roman Catholic religion as a part of the curriculum." The decision of the court, written by Judge James M. Douglas, stated:

> The constitutional policy of our state has decreed the absolute separation of Church and State, not only in governmental matters, but in educational ones as well.
>
> Public money, coming from taxpayers of every denomination, may not be used for the help of any religious sect in education or otherwise.
>
> The inclusion of St. Cecelia School in the public school system and its maintenance as a part of and as an adjunct to the parish church in its religious teachers, and where the children of every faith may be

compelled to attend and have attended, constitutes a denial of our guarantee of religious freedom.

If the management of this school were approved, we might next have some other church gaining control of a school board and have its pastor and teacher introduced to teach its sectarian religion.

Our schools would soon become the centers of local political battles which would be dangerous to the peace of society where there must be equal religious rights to all and special religious privileges to none.

The faithful observance of our constitutional provisions happily makes such a condition impossible.

"People's Fundamental Right"

The Masonic publication notes that this decision marked the first pronouncement of the Missouri Supreme Court on the vital issue of the separation of church and state, calling it "a milestone in official defense of the people's fundamental right to a non-sectarian school system." The Missouri Constitution denies the use of public funds in the aid of any church, sect, or denomination of religion, and prohibits discrimination against any religious faith or form of worship. The *Bulletin* writer adds this thoughtful comment:

Missouri's constitutional provisions on this subject are not unusual. Every one of the forty-eight states has some specific provision within its Constitution dealing with the complete separation of Church and State. The U. S. Constitution is just as definite and explicit. This separation was specifically brought out in the first Amendment—the people of colonial times placed it first in the "Bill of Rights."

When reading over the various state constitutional provisions on this subject it is hard to reach any other decision than that the people intended the separation of Church and State, particularly in the public schools, to be absolute and complete. Obviously the men who drew up these provisions did not wish to leave any loopholes. The modern tendency to seek free textbooks and free bus transportation for private and parochial school children on the theory that such public service aids the individual children and not the schools they attend break the spirit, if not the letter, of these laws.

Daily Routine

While the Meta school board provided a smaller school for the children of non-Catholics, it was intimated in the decision by Judge Douglas that there were cases when non-Catholic children attending St. Cecelia had been automatically subjected to instruction in the Catholic faith. The measure of control exercised over the school by nun teachers and the parish priest is indicated by the daily life of the children. At 8:15 a. m., they began by attending mass at the Catholic

Church. This was followed by a prayer and instruction in the Catholic faith, before starting their regular school work. Each class room had a font of Holy Water at its door, and the children were required to dip their fingers in the font and cross themselves as they entered and left the room. Prayers preceded and followed recess. On Fridays all the children were conducted to the Church for confessional. The nuns were required by their vows to contribute to their Order all that remained of their salaries as teachers after they had deducted living expenses. Testimony at the trial brought out that the parish priest had the power to force Catholic parents to transfer their children from the non-sectarian school to St. Cecelia; that while he held no official position in the school, he had "expelled" children, and even had issued diplomas over his signature as "teacher." Some Catholic parents who objected to his policies were threatened that they would go to "hell."

The "Illusion" of Catholic Liberalism

In these days when opposing philosophies of government are being fiercely debated the world around, it is well to realize the position of the Catholic Church on the issue of church and state. This is made clear in a recent work published by the Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington, D. C., entitled, *The Liberal Illusion*. According to the author, Louis Veuillot, the civil authority "is in duty bound to obey the commandment of the Pontiff." The principle of separation of the powers of church and state is denounced as unsound and the society of the Catholic Church alleged to be superior to the society of the state. Veuillot addresses the following warning to so-called "liberal" Catholics":

> "I do not say that liberal Catholics are heretics. They must first have the will to be so. Of many of them I affirm the contrary; of the rest I know nothing, and it is not for me to judge. On this question the Church will pronounce judgment at the proper time, if there be occasion to do so. But whatever be their virtues and whatever the good intentions that inspire them, I believe them to be introducing among us a heresy, and one of the most out-and-out heresies the world has ever seen."

"Saint" Torquemada

This extract from *The Liberal Illusion* appears in the *Converted Catholic* for April, a journal edited by former priests of the Roman Church, who now are devoting their energies to exposing the moral inconsistencies in a religion with which they have had personal expe-

rience. The May number reviews a book intended to whitewash the character of the "holy" inquisitors of sixteenth century Spain. Its author, W. T. Walsh, contends that Torquemada "made the Inquisition decidedly more merciful," and urges that the Grand Inquisitor must have been a "saint" because his tomb, when opened, emitted "a singularly sweet and agreeable odor." Like Veuillot, Walsh attacks the liberal Catholics, criticizing those priests who fraternize with other religious groups. He mentions in particular one priest, a former professor of the Catholic University, who "openly goes to address a Jewish-Masonic lodge (though Catholics are still forbidden by Canon 2335 to co-operate with or condone masonry in any way)—and this, according to press, not to remind his hearers of their true home in the Church Catholic, but to confirm them in their true sense of injured innocence." Lest some significance be attached to the travelling trios of priest, rabbi and protestant speakers, who appear on the same platform as evidence of religious fraternity among Christian sects, the true attitude of the Roman Church toward such gestures should never be forgotten. The Roman policy, today as always, is one of astute opportunism, and the cry of the church for "tolerance" will last only as long as it lacks temporal power.

MISSING LIMBS FELT

Lookout for February contained an account of a recent case in which pain was felt in an amputated arm. Additional evidence of this physiological wonder has been reported by the Mayo clinic. According to Dr. Irving S. Cutter, New York *Daily News,* Aug. 15):

> A recent discussion by Baily and Moersch of the Mayo Clinic cites 43 individuals who exhibited this phenomenon. Many asserted that a long abandoned limb was still present although they knew it was not. In fact, pain in the absent member at times was quite severe. . . .
>
> Occasionally these symptoms will be responsible for severe suffering and the question comes—what can be done? . . . But no matter what is done relief may not come in every case and the subject remains a puzzle.
>
> We are reminded of the old superstition that the owner of destroyed parts of the body will remain conscious of their existence just so long as they remain above ground.

But it is not a superstition that burial or other natural disposal stops the pain. Cases such as that described in the *Theosophist* for October, 1882 (see February Lookout, p. 189), show that if the limb is buried in a natural position no pain will be felt by its former owner. This is proved by the fact that when the amputated limb is released from a cramped position, the pain goes away.

But why is there the sensation of pain under any circumstances? The explanation lies with the Theosophical teaching of the astral body. As W. Q. Judge writes in the *Ocean* (p. 41):

> . . . where we find a man who still feels the leg which the surgeon has cut off, or perceives the fingers that were amputated, then the astral member has not been interfered with, and hence the man feels as if it were still on his person. For knife or acid will not injure the astral model. . . .

Mysteries of Light

The exact nature of light is not known to science, although several theories have been advanced to account for different aspects of its behavior. At present, ordinary light is regarded as both energy in motion and a very refined form of matter. But there are kinds of light more difficult to explain. Plants, animals, and even minerals give off light, and each type of luminosity has its own peculiar characteristics. Still another mystery of light is described by E. Newton Harvey, Princeton physiologist, in his book, *Living Light* (1940). He cites from Joseph Priestley, the famous chemist, the following description of seemingly *intelligent* light: "A gentleman who had been making electrical experiments for a whole afternoon in a small room, on going out of it, *observed a flame following him at some little distance.*" Dr. Harvey comments: "Here there seems to have been a difference between the artificial *Ignis fatuus,* and that met with in nature, for the flame *followed* the gentleman as he went out of the room, but the natural phenomenon generally recedes as we approach it." (*Living Light,* p. 20). Many instances of "ball lightning" are described in scientific literature. (See *Science,* Sept. 26, 1924, and Nov. 22, 1929.) Charles Fort's *Book of the Damned* describes numerous cases of strange lights which appear over land and sea, and are not accounted for by any known scientific laws or theories.

"Night Glow"

Science for July 25 attempts to explain the strange phenomenon of "night glow," a peculiar light in the atmosphere:

> The soft glow of the sky at night is not just starlight and moonlight, but is due to the magnetic activity of the earth and its atmosphere. Definite evidence to support this fact has been reported at the Lick Observatory. Donald R. Barber, a British astronomer who has been working at the observatory for the past year on a fellowship, conducted the research. Astronomers have long speculated on the cause of the night glow, which is visible even on moonless nights. Those who attempted telescopic photographs have often

had their photographic plates clouded by this eerie light which varies from night to night and from hour to hour. . . .

Magnetic currents which ceaselessly flow around the earth are probably stimulated by radiations from the sun, principally active during daylight hours. The readjustment of the night atmosphere from solar disturbances of the day before probably are the cause of the heretofore unexplained night glow.

This account, while hardly an adequate explanation, at least makes clear that the earth is a pulsating body surrounded by magnetic tides of great power. The manner of production of the light is obscure, though the above suggestion would seem to indicate that ionization of the atmosphere is accompanied by a gaseous glow.

Suffice it to say that there will be no real knowledge of the nature of light until scientists recognize the truth of the occult axiom: "Life is light, and both are electricity." The various forms of light, on this principle, may be understood as the energic expressions of various forms of intelligence—from the tiny gleam of an insect to the glow of a planet. But today, as in 1888—

When an Occultist speaks of Fohat—the energizing and guiding intelligence in the Universal Electric or *Vital* Fluid,—he is laughed at. Withal, as now shown, neither the nature of electricity, nor of Life, nor even of Light, are to this day understood. The Occultist sees in the manifestation of every force in Nature, the action of the quality, or the specific characteristic of its noumenon: which *noumenon* is a distinct and intelligent Individuality *on the other side of the manifested mechanical Universe.* Now the Occultist does not deny—on the contrary he will support the claim—that light, heat, electricity and so on are *affections* (not properties or qualities) of matter. To put it more clearly: matter is the condition—the necessary basis or vehicle, a sine qua non—for the manifestation of these forces, or agents, on this plane. (*S. D.* I, 493.)

CENSORSHIP IN AUSTRALIA

The love scenes of modern motion pictures so offend the sensibilities of the natives of Australia that they bring electric torches to the theater with them, and when the embraces begin they flash light on the screen to obliterate the objectionable parts of the picture! A dispatch from Darwin, Australia (Los Angeles *Herald and Express,* Sept. 10) tells of the esthetic tragedy of one tribe which walked 400 miles to see their first film, only to leave in disgust before the entertainment was over. They had brought no flashlights, other natives having failed to warn them of the white man's customs. Darwin police reported that none of them wanted to see another movie. They marched out of the theater and headed for home when the love-making commenced.